

*TIVERTON HARBOR COMMISSION
343 HIGHLAND ROAD
TIVERTON RHODE ISLAND*

MINUTES OF MEETING

NOVEMBER 2, 2009

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Chairman John McEwing.

Present were Harbor Commission members: John McEwing, David Stewart, Bob Dixon, Roger Winiarski, Harris Gruber, Frank diMauro, Bruce Cox, Harbormaster Dave Vannier and Assistant Harbormaster George "Chip" Reuther.

Also present was Riverside Drive resident Charlie Smith.

Minutes of the September 14 meeting were approved as written.

COMPLAINTS -

1 – John McEwing, who resides on Riverside Drive, described extensively the congestion on Riverside Drive, now that the construction of the new Sakonnet River Bridge is underway, citing frequent complete stoppages of traffic and very poor road surface conditions. His wife occasionally required immediate transportation to a hospital, due to a medical condition, and that, at times, passage is impossible, for either a passenger car or an ambulance. He also cited damage suffered to the undercarriage of one of his cars, due to road conditions. He and his wife have had at least one heated discussion on the matter with Town officials, including one on scene.

2 – There will reportedly be a ?meeting? Of the Sakonnet River Bridge ?committee? (with the Town Administrator? At Town Hall?) At 3 PM on November 10. It was remarked by most that this was a wholly inappropriate time for such a meeting, as most residents were working at that time and would not be able to attend to voice their concerns.

3 – Member Roger Winiarski, whose shop is located on Riverside Drive and Evans Avenue, has been denied access numerous times, sometimes for over an hour. He is also a qualified CPR instructor and stated that, in the event of a medical emergency at a residence or place of business in the construction area, these delays can definitely be life-threatening. He said, for example, that, in the event of a heart attack, under such traffic conditions, survivability chances are near ZERO.

Roger also related how, during the early stages of this project, his shop, at the bottom of the Evans Avenue hill, was subject to several inches of mud covering the shop floor, resulting in a loss to him of 90 hours of business time.

4 – In conversations with the owner of Riverside Marina, who has a shop, marina and launching ramp adjacent to the existing bridge, that his revenue this year was down to half of normal, principally due to impeded access.

5 – It was remarked by several members, that since there is a monetary bonus system in place for the bridge contractor for early bridge completion, it appears that safety of residents is being sacrificed for profit.

5 – Resident Charlie Smith related how, numerous times since construction has begun, he has been denied access to his home.....and only achieved same by aggressively approaching construction personnel and police on the scene, including threatening to call the state police in order to gain access.

6 – Discussion further revolved around the suggestion of asking the local newspaper to publicize as many of these incidents as possible, in order to gain official attention to the matter. It was also pointed out that the property taxes of the residents and commercial operators on Riverside contribute a significant amount to the Town's tax revenue.

CORRESPONDENCE -

1 – A letter was received from the Fogland Beach Oversight Committee (unsure about subject matter).

2 – A letter was received from the Town Administrator (excessively officious, as read), asking the same questions that have been answered over and over again for several years past, as to what notification is required by the Harbor Commission from Town officials, regarding building construction or renovation within 200 feet of the Mean High Water Mark, including dock and seawall construction or renovation. This requirement is clearly stipulated in the regulations of the RI Coastal Resources Management Council and in the Harbor Management Plan of the Town. The problem appears to be a source of constant irritation to Town officials and to the Harbor Commission. John McEwing will contact Jody at the Building Inspector's office and David Stewart and John McEwing, or other designated HC members, will endeavor to visit the Town offices frequently to determine what new applications have been received that might require review by the Harbor Commission before proceeding. There is no workable system for such notification in place at this time.

3 – David Stewart presented a letter from an agency that is encouraging the re-

cycling of fishing line, in order to prevent discarding same in Town and channel waters. Not recovering used or excess fishing line endangers fish and other water creatures in numerous ways, not to mention fouling boat propellers and underwater hardware on boats.

NEW BUSINESS -

1 – The Tiverton Harbormaster's Budget is to be presented to the Town Council on December 14. The following items were noted:

A - \$2400 has been added for extra patrols during the Sakonnet River Bridge construction.

B – Cost for mooring stickers has been deleted, as a new system will be put in place for next season.

C – The existing Harbor Patrol boat is aging; a new or newer boat will have to be considered soon, and future budgets will anticipate this.

D – Major overhaul or service on the one existing motor is now required.

Bruce Cox made a motion to approve the budget as presented by the Harbormaster. Discussion ensued. Bob Dixon pointed out that the bottom line would now be ?\$22,780? A vote to approve the budget, with this modification, was unanimous.

2 - Harris Gruber brought up the question of documentation requirements for each new mooring application and each renewal application, pointing out that other towns require proof of ownership of the boat that will go on the mooring, as well as proof of owner's residency in Tiverton. Harbormaster Dave Vannier responded that, as he has taken over the logistics of assigning moorings from the previous Harbormaster, this system is being tightened up and will fully address these issues for the 2010 season.

HARBORMASTER'S REPORT -

1 – HM showed numerous photos of an effort being made by SAVE THE BAY and HARBOR CLEANUP, using a surplus landing craft. Photos showed the results of retrieving numerous sunken boats, tire booms and other debris. The debris retrieved required somewhere between four and eleven dumpsters to dispose of all the materials.

2 – Harbormaster's patrol boat log shows 278 hours of patrol this year, versus 98 last year.

3 – He has ceased “tagging” moorings for this year, but is still checking for abandoned and illegal moorings, as before.

4 – The patrol boat will be hauled on its trailer after Thanksgiving and stored for the winter at the Harbormaster's home.

Acceptance of the report was approved unanimously.

5 – A brief discussion of the actual condition of the Stone Bridge abutment was begun, but is to be continued at a future meeting. This is of especial interest for a variety of reasons, including the integrity of the structure and the possible future re-commissioning of the Town Landeing dinghy docks.

6 – Additional discussion about moorings was touched upon and will be pursued at a future meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted.....Harris Gruber, Secretary